

(b) (1)
(b) (3)

~~Top Secret~~



Weapons Intelligence Summary

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: APR 2005

~~Top Secret~~

18 December 1975

Copy 108

~~TOP SECRET~~

18 December 1975

OTHER
INDICATORS
OF A PRC
PHOTORECON-
NAISSANCE
PROGRAM

A variety of indicators exist which strengthen the association of China's latest satellite with a photoreconnaissance effort and which highlight China's long term interest in this program.

In early December of this year, [redacted] the PRC had just launched a surveillance satellite which travelled across the Soviet Union and which is part of China's early warning system.

[redacted] The satellite [redacted] [redacted] was China's fourth which was launched on 26 November (see WIS for 28 November).

[redacted] that reconnaissance satellites had the highest priority of the various Chinese space programs. Perhaps as evidence of this priority, [redacted] 1975 strongly criticized the 7th Ministry of Machine Building (responsible for development and production of missiles) for failure to meet a satellite launch schedule. The 26 July 1975 satellite launch appeared to be the launch in question. A Shanghai office had assumed responsibility for this satellite launch because the 7th Ministry's involvement with the satellite was alleged to be a failure as a result of organizational chaos and factionalism within the Ministry.

Chinese interest in a photographic satellite capability has been evident for several years. In early 1971, the Chinese sought

-3-

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]

18 December 1975

advice on the coating of special glass for space use. Later that same year they tried to obtain the technology required for stereo photography for use in their space program.

Since 1966 the Chinese have also imported equipment needed for photography. Some of the equipment is no doubt intended for China's space reconnaissance program. The most recent equipment

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]